

ACTIVITIES

Drug Abuse Warning Network (DAWN) Survey Shows Marijuana and Cocaine Emergency Department Visits Up. Emergency department mentions of cocaine increased 10 percent, and marijuana mentions increased 15 percent from 2000 to 2001, according to new DAWN data released by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). The 2001 DAWN data show 638,484 drug-related hospital emergency department visits in the continental United States in 2001, an increase of 6 percent over 2000 for both visits to emergency departments involving drugs and in mentions of drugs. Marijuana mentions, which rose to the same level as heroin in 1997, continued to increase. Marijuana mentions rose 15 percent between 2000 and 2001 and were concentrated in patients aged 12 to 34 years. Increases for marijuana were reported in Minneapolis, San Diego, San Francisco, and Baltimore. Decreases were reported only in New Orleans. Cocaine mentions increased 10 percent from 2000 to 2001, with 24 percent of these mentions attributed to crack. Increases for cocaine were noted in Atlanta, Minneapolis, San Francisco, and Boston. Decreases in cocaine reports occurred in New Orleans, San Diego, and Dallas. Heroin mentions were statistically unchanged, and methamphetamine and club drug mentions showed no significant nationwide change. The complete report, including text and tables, is available at www.drugabusestatistics.samhsa.gov.

HHS Report Shows Fewer Teens Using Tobacco or Marijuana or Engaging in Risky Sexual Behavior. High school students are acting more responsibly by avoiding tobacco, marijuana, and risky sexual behavior and other potentially dangerous behaviors that increase their risk for injury, illness, and death according to a new report recently released by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The report, which is based on surveys of 9th- to 12th-grade students conducted in 2001, also showed that teenagers are more likely to wear seatbelts and stay out of cars with drivers who had been drinking.

The 2001 Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System report revealed continued positive trends in most measures of students' injury- and violence-related behaviors, as well as sexual behaviors that increase the risk for HIV infection, other sexually transmitted diseases, and unintended pregnancies. In a few areas, the trends go the other way, including a significant drop since 1991 in the percentage of students who receive daily physical education instruction, which increases their risk for obesity and related illnesses. More information about the report is available at www.cdc.gov/yrbs.

ONDCP Launches New Public Service Announcements Promoting Community Coalitions. The Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) and the Ad Council recently launched new ads to promote awareness of, and involvement with, community drug prevention coalitions and to demonstrate what a community can accomplish when multiple sectors join forces. This theme is exemplified in the campaign's tagline, "You get more when you get together." Television, radio, print, outdoor, and Web banner ads feature a national toll-free number, 1-877-KIDS-313, and a dedicated Web site, www.helpyourcommunity.org. A specially designed ZIP Code-based search feature of almost 500 antidrug coalitions provides an outstanding opportunity for local organizations to reach interested individuals and groups in their communities. To preview some of the ads, visit www.adcouncil.org/campaigns/community_drug_prevention.

Television and Radio Public Service Announcements Unveiled for 2002 National Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month. SAMHSA recently released a series of television and radio public service announcements (PSAs) with two distinct themes designed to motivate target audiences to support those individuals in recovery and to refer those in need of treatment services to SAMHSA's 24-hour helpline at 1-800-662-HELP. The theme

for this year's Recovery Month observance, held in September, was "Join the Voices of Recovery: A Call to Action." The Recovery Month PSAs, kit, Webcasts, and other materials and information are available at www.samhsa.gov. Information also is available by calling 1-800-729-6686. The theme for the 2003 Recovery Month observance is "Join the Voices of Recovery: Celebrating Health."

Government Annual "Seal of Approval" Awarded to 25 Substance Abuse Prevention Programs. SAMHSA recently announced the names of 25 substance abuse prevention programs that received the Government "seal of approval" for preventing and reducing illegal drug use, alcohol abuse, and other risky behaviors in communities across the United States. The programs were selected after a rigorous scientific review of more than 200 substance abuse prevention programs. The 25 model programs will receive the Exemplary Substance Abuse Prevention Program Award and be listed in SAMHSA's National Registry of Effective Prevention Programs. SAMHSA also identified five promising programs for implementing innovative, community-based prevention programs that have shown promising results in preventing youth from engaging in the use of alcohol and illicit drugs. Community leaders and interested organizations may access information on the model programs at www.modelprograms.samhsa.gov.

SAMHSA and the National Council on Aging (NCOA) Release New Guide on Substance Abuse and Mental Health Problems Among Older Adults. SAMHSA and NCOA recently released a guide for community-based organizations to use in meeting the mental health and substance abuse needs of older adults. The new guide, *Promoting Older Adult Health: Aging Network Partnerships to Address Medication, Alcohol and Mental Health Problems*, provides concrete, practical guidance for mental health, substance abuse, primary care, and aging services providers to help them join forces to provide education, prevention, screening, referrals, and treatment for seniors dealing with substance abuse and mental health problems. Copies of the guide are available by calling the National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information at 1-800-729-6686.

NIAAA and NOFAS Launch Awareness Campaign in the District of Columbia: "Play It Safe. Alcohol and Pregnancy Don't Mix." The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) and the National Organization on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (NOFAS) recently launched a campaign to raise awareness of the risks associated with drinking during pregnancy, the leading known preventable cause of birth defects and learning difficulties. The "Play it safe. Alcohol and pregnancy don't mix." campaign begins with a 2-year pilot program that targets African-American women of childbearing age in the District of Columbia and their families and friends through mass media events, special events, and community partnership activities. Campaign materials and additional information are available by calling 202-546-9166.